



**TESTIMONY OF  
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FOR PRESENTATION BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Tuesday, November 7, 2023**

Chairman Bost, Ranking Member Takano and Members of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs:

I am honored to join you today as an Army veteran and the new leader of Walmart's Military Programs, to share with the Committee the work we are doing to support military families and create opportunities with employment, and beyond, for veterans and military spouses. I am grateful for your leadership and partnership in honoring our nation's veterans' service and sacrifice, and for all you do to aid in their transition to civilian life.

At Walmart, we're committed to supporting those who serve, and we have been since the very beginning. Our founder, Sam Walton, served in the U.S. Army Intelligence Corps during World War II and brought with him the values that define our company to this day. It is that same set of values that make us so grateful for our nation's veterans. As we reflect on their sacrifices, we look to honor their futures too. [Honoring service members is in our DNA.](#)

Our goal is to support veterans and military families during and after their service. That's how we've built a culture where [veterans feel they belong](#), with benefits for their well-being and an understanding that the skills gained in service can transfer to any job.

In 2013, we announced our Veterans Welcome Home Commitment. Since then, we've hired more than 533,000 veterans and military spouses and promoted nearly 64,000 to roles with greater responsibility and higher pay.

Building on the success of our Veterans Welcome Home Commitment, we launched [Find a Future](#) at the end of June 2021. Find a Future is a tool that guides military-related prospects through an audit of their current skills, experience, and education. It fosters conversations about a wide range of future possibilities and aspirations, including employment, education, and entrepreneurial outcomes, and then teaches them how to build a road map and how to make connections with partners and resources to help achieve their goals.

Our efforts have paid off. After more than three and a half million engagements with members of the military community through Find a Future, we are now expanding the platform and taking what we have learned to create opportunities for other communities, including our own associates. So, whether you're just starting out, reentering the workforce after a gap, looking to earn a career certificate or advanced degree, or even thinking about launching a new career or business, we'll help you reach your goals.

Support for our nation's service members comes in many forms, including the knowledge that there's a job waiting for you if the military relocates your family. Walmart's Military Family Promise guarantees a job at a nearby Walmart store or Sam's Club for all military personnel and military spouses employed by the company who are transferred by the U.S. military. It allows military spouses, in particular, to remain in the same personnel and pay systems, and gives them the opportunity to turn jobs into careers.

Associates and their families also can take comfort in knowing that their well-being is among our top priorities. They have access to free counseling sessions, coaching, and digital wellness tools to help them manage stressors, build resilience, and get the care they need fast.

Our medical coverage starts at just \$33/month and includes virtual medical care and psychiatry services for all eligible plan participants. Associates and their families also can get discounts on fitness plans. Qualifying associates can take advantage of our 401(k) match and our associate stock purchase plan. It's all part of our commitment to help our associates live better.

Walmart also has key relationships with organizations focused on supporting those who have served in the military. Organizations such as Merging Vets and Players (MVP) provide veterans with a new team to assist with transition, promote personal development and show them they are never alone. Sheep Dog Impact Assistance is another organization that offers veterans opportunities for physical activities to foster

camaraderie, peer-to-peer training to transform struggle into strength and volunteer opportunities for continued service.

Once associates are hired, they have access to one of the world's largest learning ecosystems so they can take the valuable skills and experiences they bring to their job and expand their horizons even further from day one of employment.

We've launched a career fellowship program, expanding our investment and involvement in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Hiring Our Heroes programs to offer hiring summits and fellowship opportunities to veterans and their families.

Walmart Academy offers hands-on, immersive learning, using cutting-edge technology in handheld devices, virtual reality and combining both classroom study and training on the sales floor. Last year, the Academies helped more than 400,000 associates build the skillset they want.

Through Live Better U (LBU), Walmart associates get access to education and training programs to help them excel in their jobs and create the career paths they want – 100% paid for by Walmart. Since the program launched in 2018, associates have saved nearly half a billion dollars in tuition costs.

These are just a few of the ways we strive to ensure all learning counts and reflects our commitment to creating a path for every associate to learn and grow.

While I've shared with you what Walmart is doing to recruit, hire and retain veteran talent, we're also deeply committed to sourcing products from veteran-owned businesses to add to our stores and on-line assortment. In fact, in FY23 Walmart spent \$1.2 billion with veteran-owned suppliers.

As a founding member of the [Coalition of Veteran Owned Business](#), Walmart is committed to help grow and support veteran owned businesses in communities throughout the U.S. This first-of-its-kind national initiative supports the success of veteran, service member, and military spouse-owned businesses by connecting them with entrepreneurial education and training, small business resources and solutions, and commerce and supplier opportunities to help connect and educate both sides on doing business together.

Additionally, Walmart hosted our tenth annual "Open Call" event October 24 and 25, where we provided entrepreneurs the opportunity to meet face-to-face with Walmart and/or Sam's Club and potentially get their products on our shelves or on our e-

commerce platform – and ultimately, in the hands of our customers. Open Call is part of our commitment to spend an additional \$350 billion over 10 years on items made, grown, or assembled in the U.S.

One of those businesses, Grind Oral Care, sells U.S.-made toothpaste to customers across the country in stores and online thanks to their appearance at Open Call in 2022. Grind is a small, veteran-owned business based in Salt Lake City, UT that supports veterans experiencing homelessness and gives to nonprofits that work with veterans. We're proud to have helped Grind grow.

To strengthen our support of veterans as they reintegrate into their local communities, Walmart and the [Walmart Foundation](#), our philanthropic arm, have invested more than \$44 million since 2011, in job training, education and innovative public/private community-based initiatives.

Walmart also offers a wide range of programs that are available to veteran organizations, such as our [Spark Good](#) programs, which includes our local community grants program and programs designed to engage both associates and customers. Now through November 30, we are running a campaign through Spark Good Round Up, where Walmart will match customer donations 2:1 at checkout online to veteran charitable organizations, including up to \$2 million for Operation Homefront.

Walmart and the Walmart Foundation aim to build a skills-based talent marketplace that recognizes the rich skills transitioning military and veterans bring to the table, unlocking opportunity and accelerating economic mobility for them in the civilian sectors. We have supported many organizations doing great work with veterans through our commitments. Three that I want to call out are [Hire Heroes USA](#), the [Institute for Veterans and Military Families](#) (IVMF) at Syracuse University, and the [Manufacturing Institute](#).

Hire Heroes USA's singular focus on veteran employment is not only working to place veterans with the right job, but also gaining incredible insights into what the critical needs are for those separating from service. We have supported them with multiple grants over the years, with our most recent grant supporting their focus on updating internal practices and processes to ensure their team can enable each veteran to translate their skills for civilian employment.

IVMF's [AmericaServes](#) program streamlines and digitally connects veterans to services in their communities. Through our commitment, we have supported AmericaServes

programs in multiple communities, and continue to provide direct support for their work in Texas.

The Manufacturing Institute has long since served veterans through their [Heroes MAKE America](#) program, which has supported service members with transitioning into the manufacturing industry. Since 2022, we have supported the institute with over \$1.5 million in funding to support their coordinated effort with [Solutions for Information Design](#) and [Jobs for the Future](#) to modernize how skills are translated from military service to civilian occupations. An effort we believe will be transferable to other industries.

As we look to the future, we see great potential to address the remaining barriers to successful transition from military service to civilian life, but only through collaboration and a shared vision will we realize it. We will continue making investments in veteran serving organizations. We recognize it is only when government programs and initiatives, large and small corporations, and non-profit organizations come together that much is possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with the Committee how Walmart is supporting the military and veteran communities through a strategic mix of employment, education, entrepreneurship, well-being programs, and philanthropic efforts. And, again, thank you to the Committee for your leadership and partnership in serving the veteran community. We remain steadfastly dedicated to this work, now, and into the future, and look forward to continuing to evolve and grow our approach to best serve veterans and military families. Finally, I'd like to conclude by extending my deepest respect and gratitude to my fellow veterans for your sacrifice and service.

I look forward to the opportunity to answer any questions you may have.